

The Valley COMIC N . E . W . S

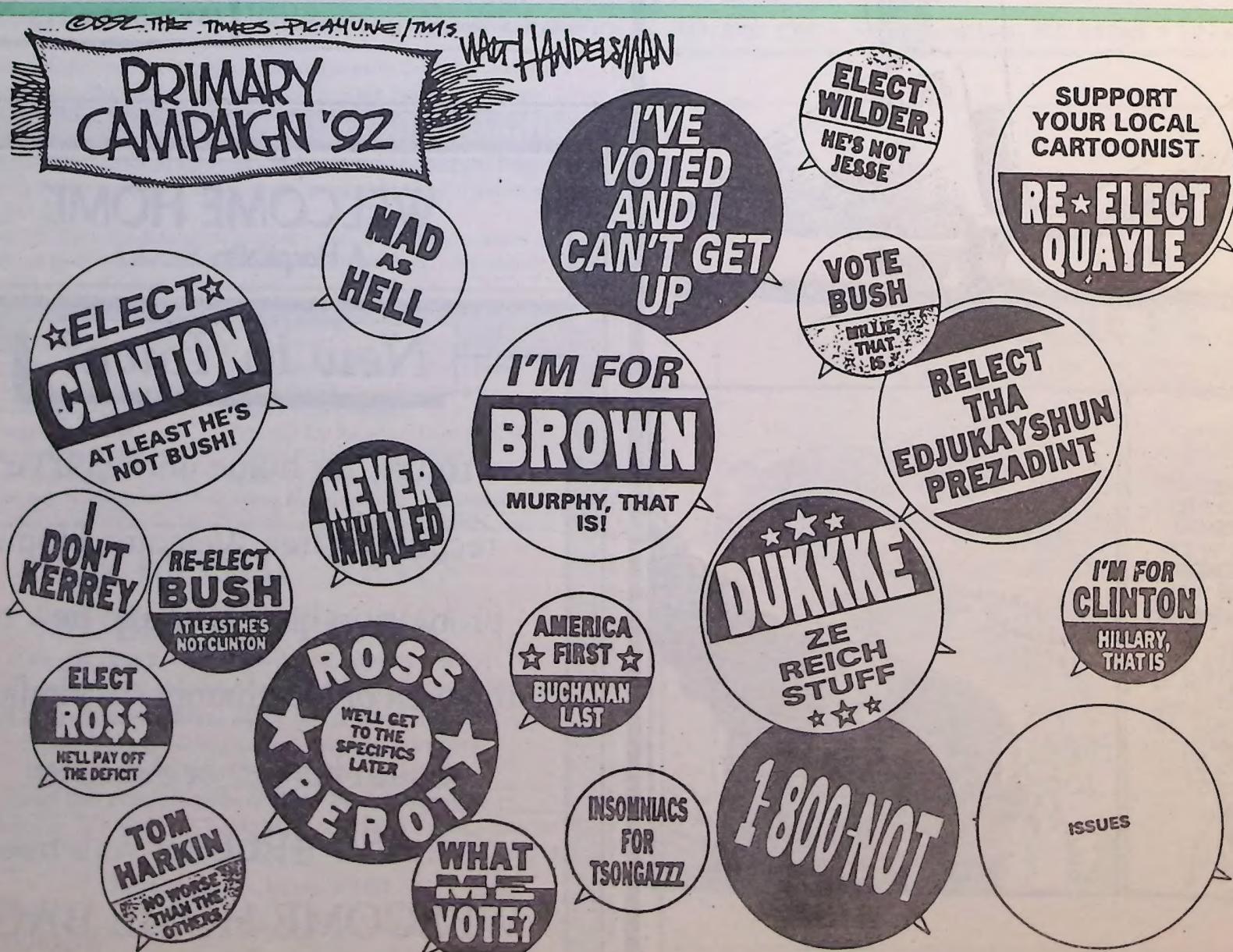


EPISODE # 66
June 25, 1992

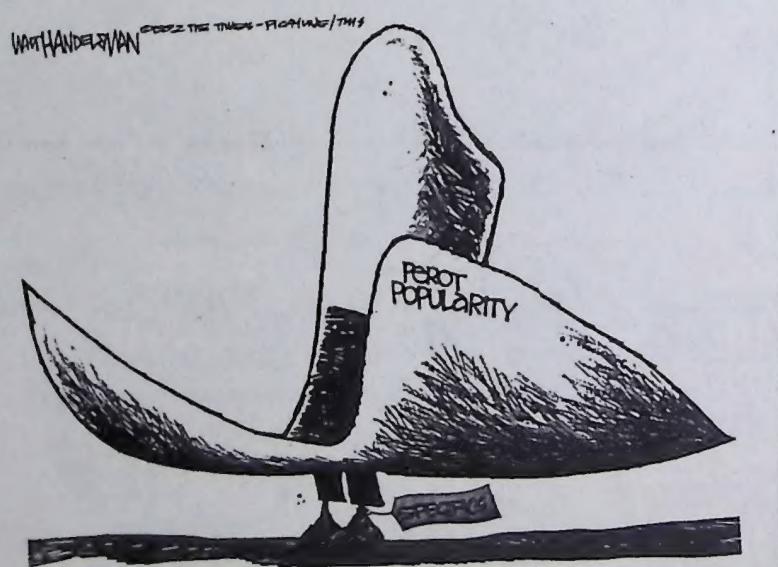
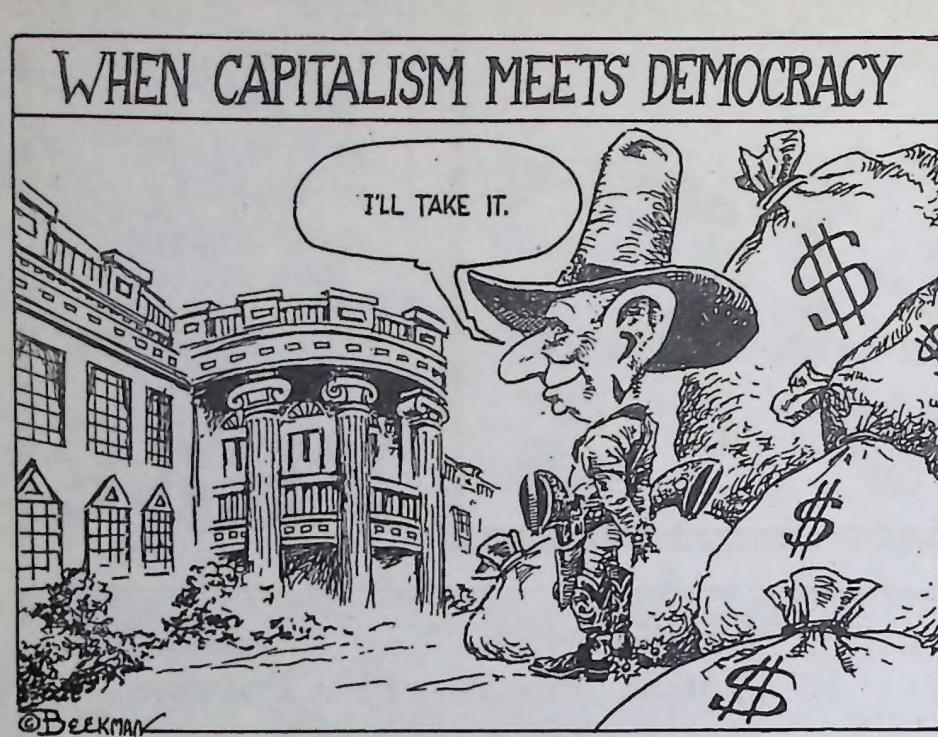
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PAGE THREE

by Mike Chrisman

Hi again, everybody, and welcome to another edition of Home Repairs Made Easy. Today's topic is "Electricity: Friend or Foe?" We'll base our lesson on a simple problem I had in my own home.

When I first moved into my home, four electrical outlets (where you put the plug) didn't have "faceplates" on them. Faceplates are those flat covers that keep the loose electrons and ohms from dribbling into little puddles under your plugs. They also keep the monsters in your walls from squirming out around the outlets.

Faceplates come in three colors: ivory (for people who want their friends to think part of their home was carved from the body of an endangered species); brown (to make the tax assessors think your house is as interesting as dirt); and white (so you can't see them against your wall, and you'll forget monsters might be trying to get out).

Anyway, since "Home Repair" is my middle name, I decided to install some faceplates. Here's a tip: whenever you work with electricity, always turn *everything* off. For this project I shut off the power at my circuit breaker box, then just to make sure, I called the power company and asked them to disconnect my power at the electric meter, then — acting quickly — I cut down a tree on my property so it would fall on the power lines and knock out power all over town.

Electricians say, "Treat every wire as if it's hot." I always do. Rubber is a good insulator, so before I installed the first faceplate, I put on a complete rubber wet suit, including flippers. It's very safe, and kinky enough so your family will leave you alone.

Another tip: always assume a home repair project will take a *really* long time. This is because of Murphy's Law, which people *used* to think said, "If something can go wrong, it will." We now know this is rubbish. Murphy was an engineer at NASA in the days before computers. He had to use primitive tools for his calculations, things like "slide rules" and "pencils" — objects that our children can view today in the Smithsonian's new wing: Tools of the Fogies. What Murphy really said was, "Everything definitely *will* go wrong."

Next I turned on my portable radio, loud, to distract me from thinking about how much damage electricity could do to my fingers, or to my house, if I put the faceplates on wrong. It took one teeny screw to install each faceplate, and I couldn't remember where my teeny screwdriver was, with the radio blaring so loud, so I used my fingernail, which broke while I was tightening the first screw. This meant I had to finish tightening the screw the best I could with my fingers, and then put screws in the next three faceplates by using three *other* fingernails, all of which broke, and one of them cracked way down to where it really hurts when you try to pull off the broken part.

By that time the power company had restored power to the rest of town, and I was getting nervous because electricity was right outside my house, with nothing to stop it from coming inside except the disconnected electric meter and the turned-off circuit breaker.

So I said, "Forget it," although I couldn't hear myself say it over the radio, and I decided to leave the faceplates hanging sort of loosely against the wall, even though there's probably ohms and electrons leaking out like crazy, and also monsters. Then I cleaned up, including the blood.

A final tip: if you decide to install faceplates, study the above procedures carefully (clip them and put them in your home repair notebook), and then (when nobody else is home) drive into town and hire an electrician.

The Valley Comic News

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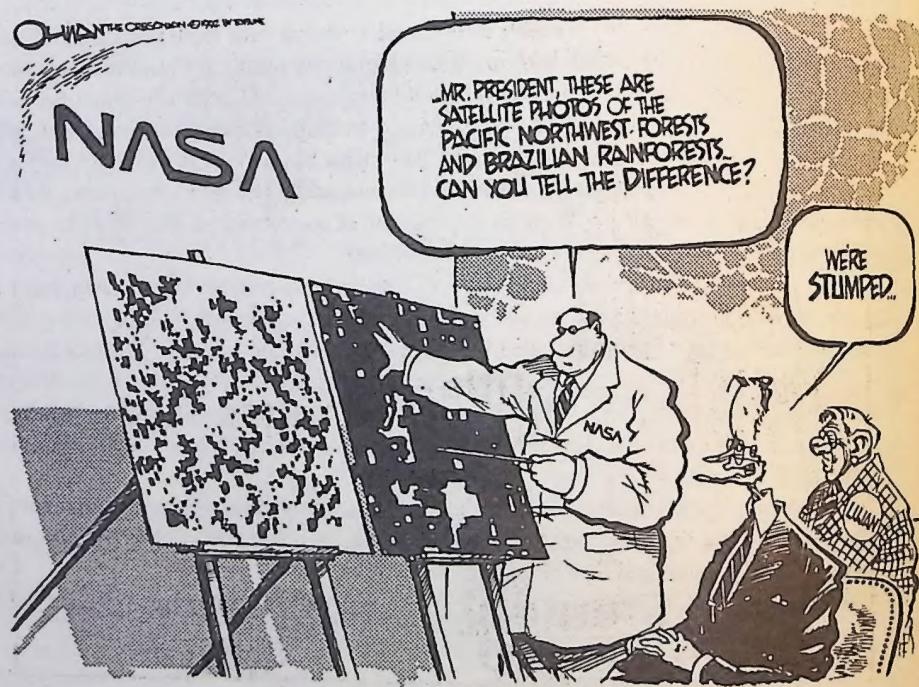
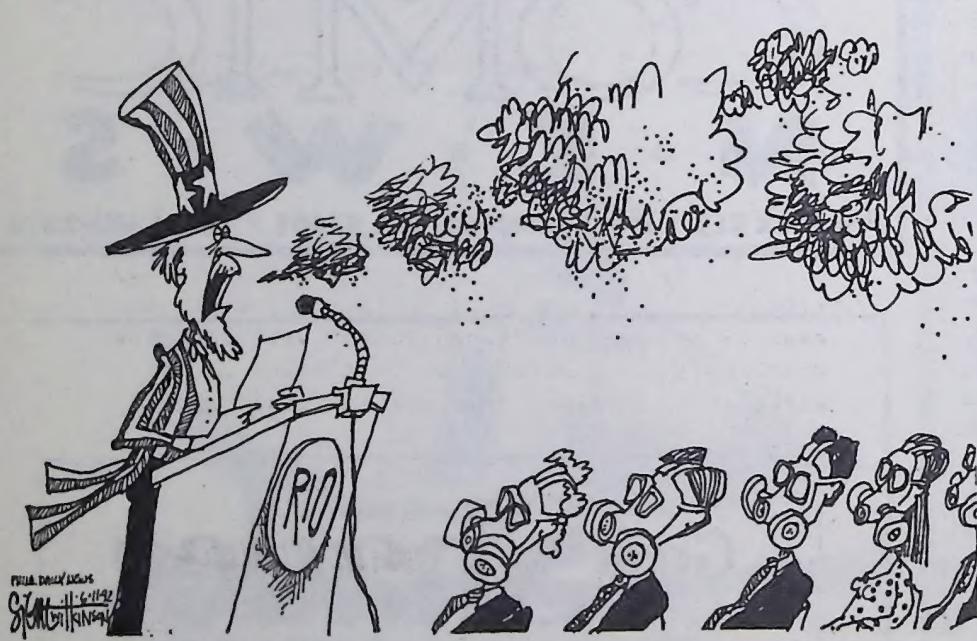
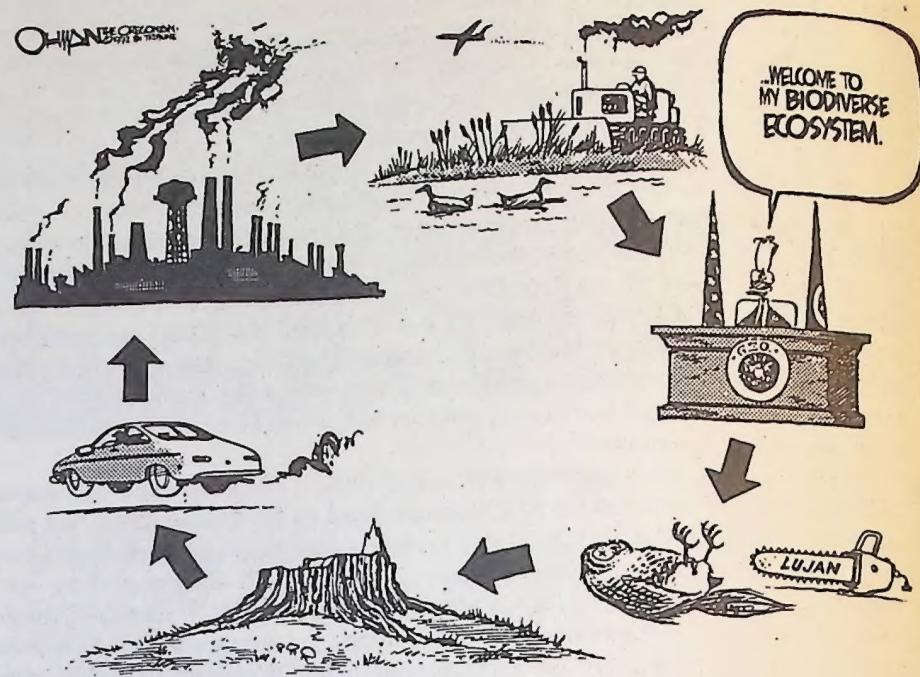
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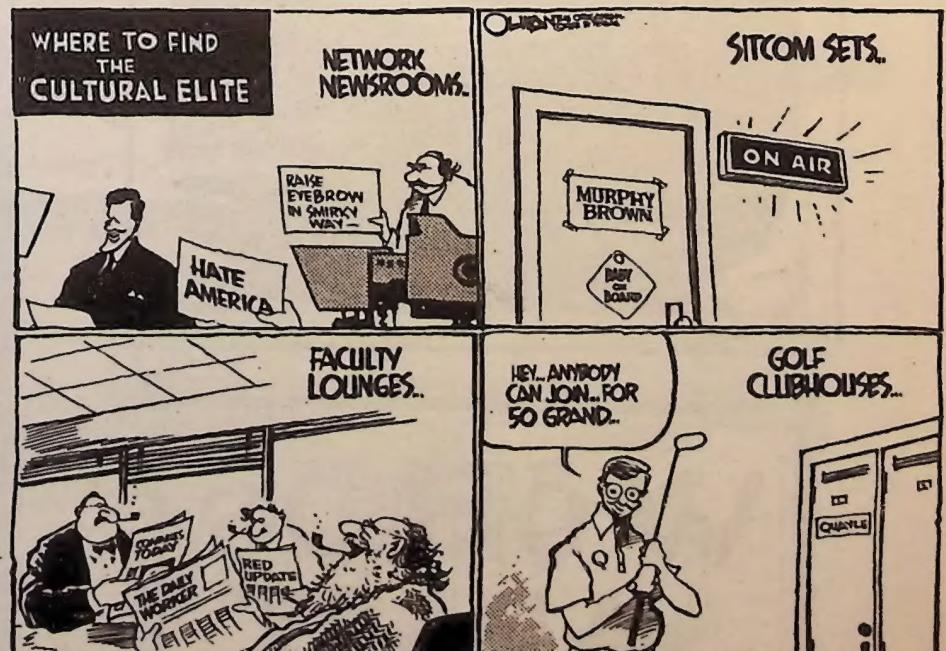
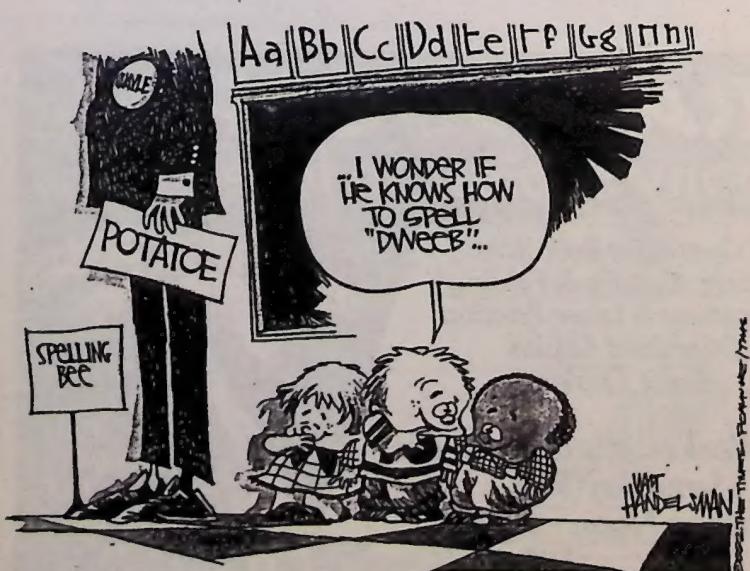
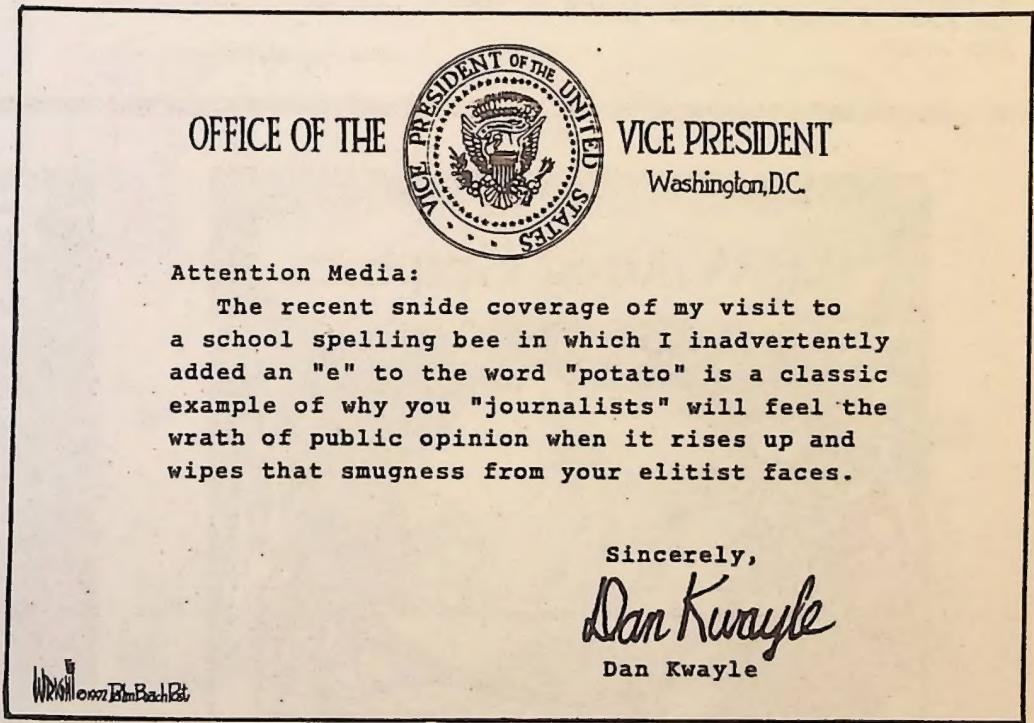
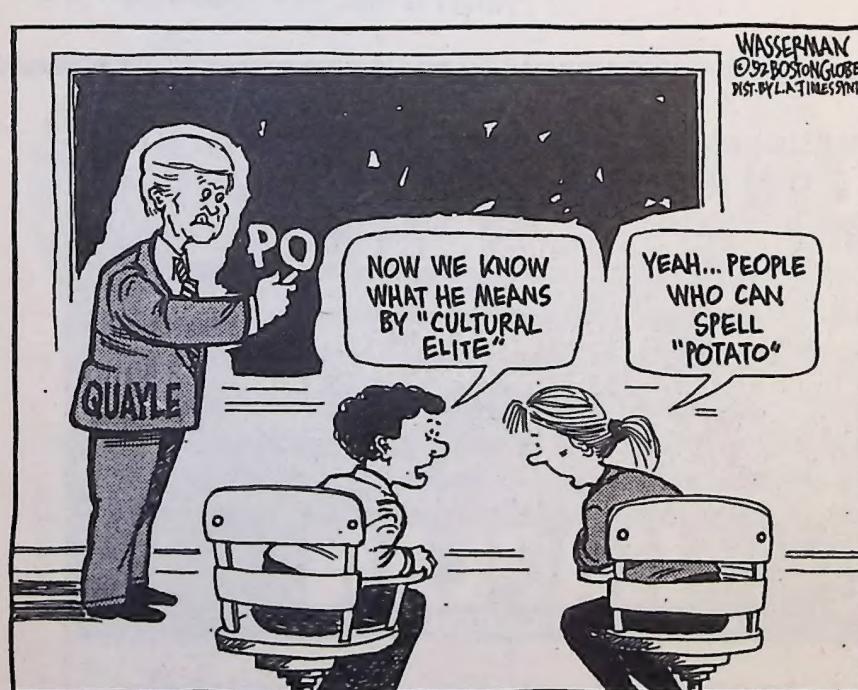
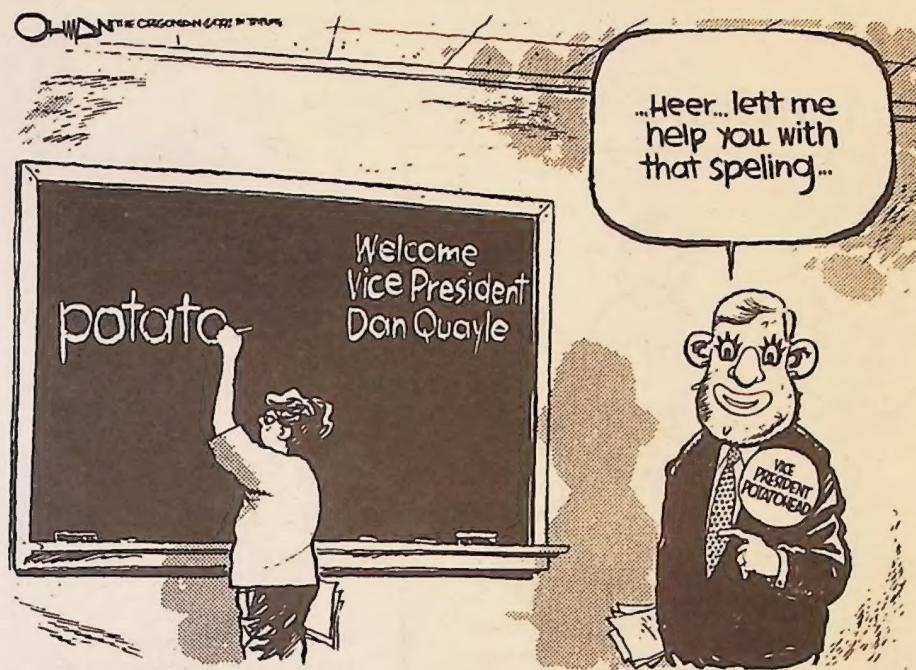
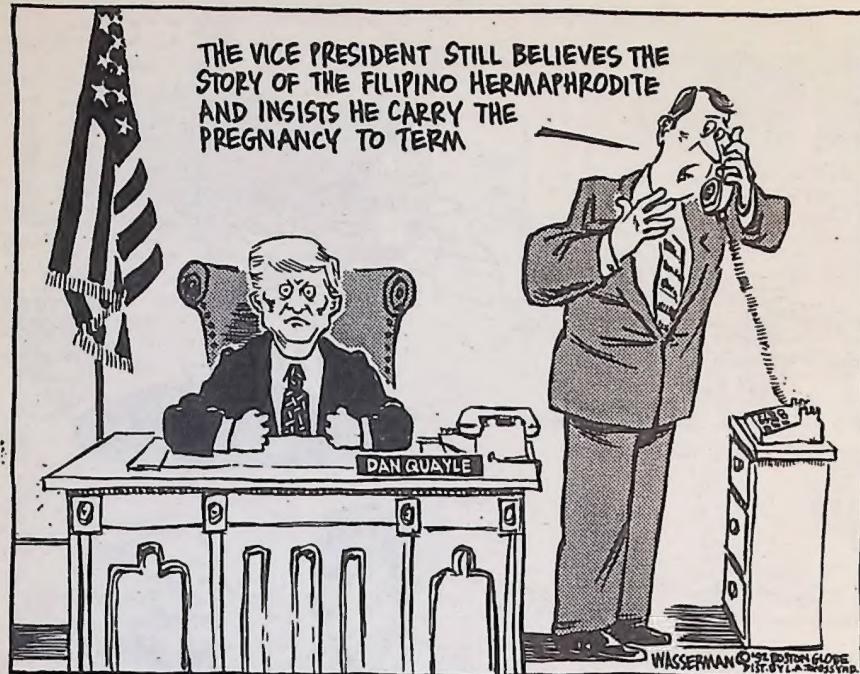
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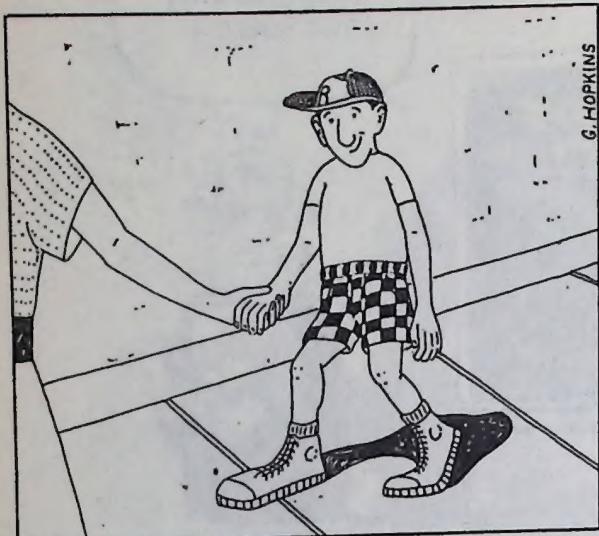


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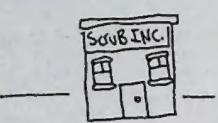
LOCAL HEROES

dog feathers by Giles Hopkins

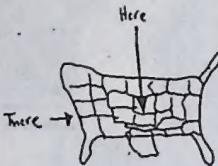


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Following Uncle Harry's Advice.
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Moving out of the midwest to the West Coast
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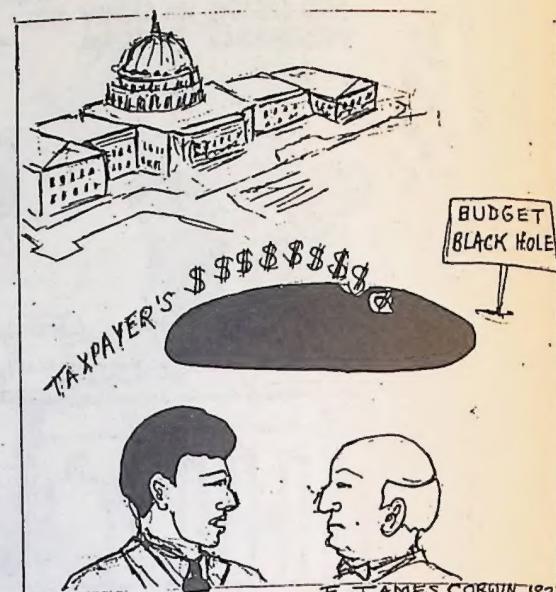
Putnam Goodwin-Boyd



Eating girlfriend Amelia's pancakes.
("That's what caused my ulcer")



Not Saving his Comic books
and baseball cards
("I woulda been on easy st. right now").



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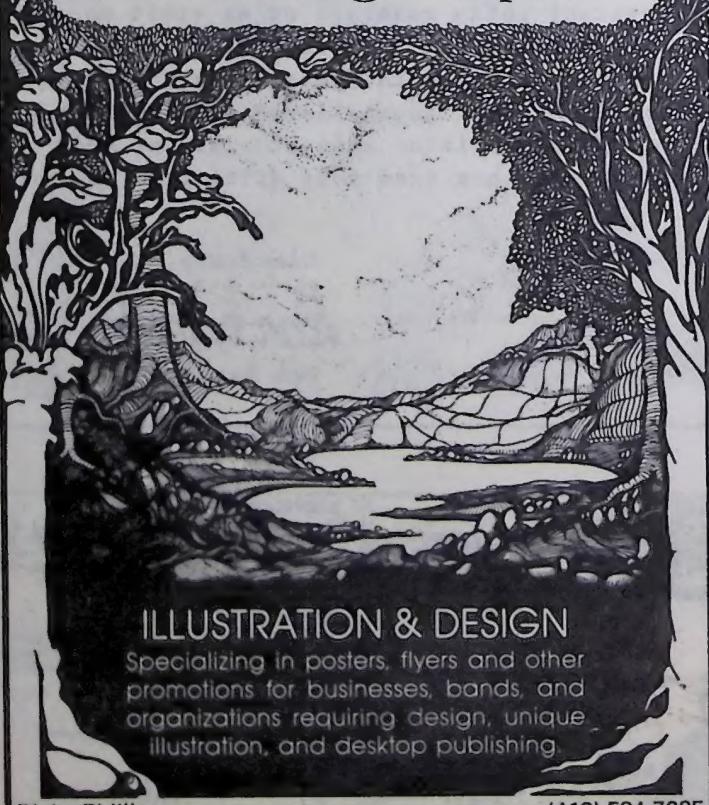


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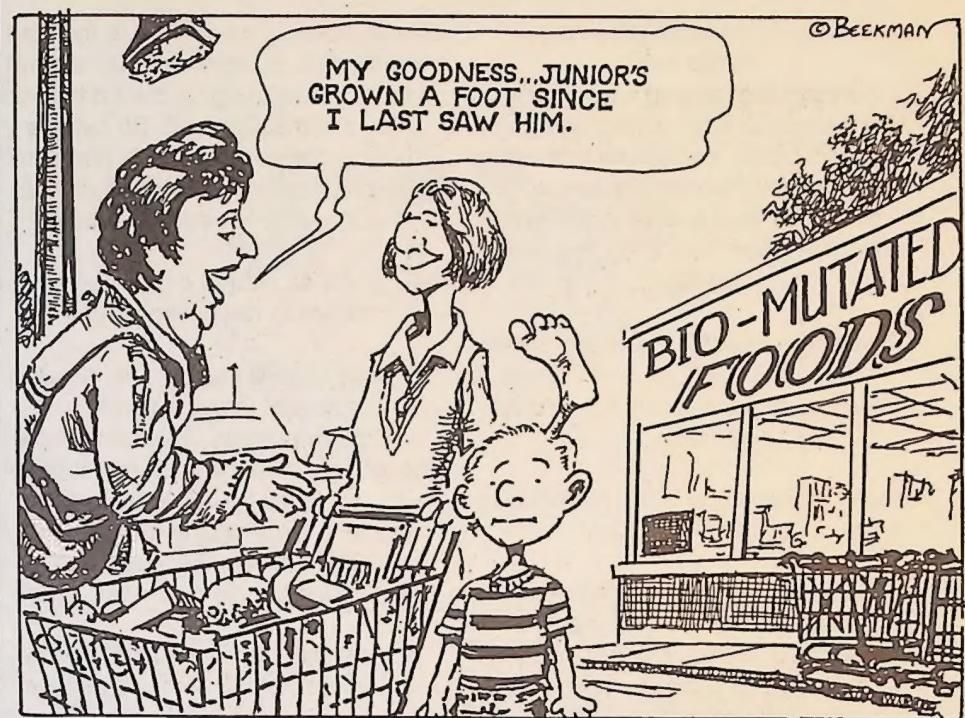
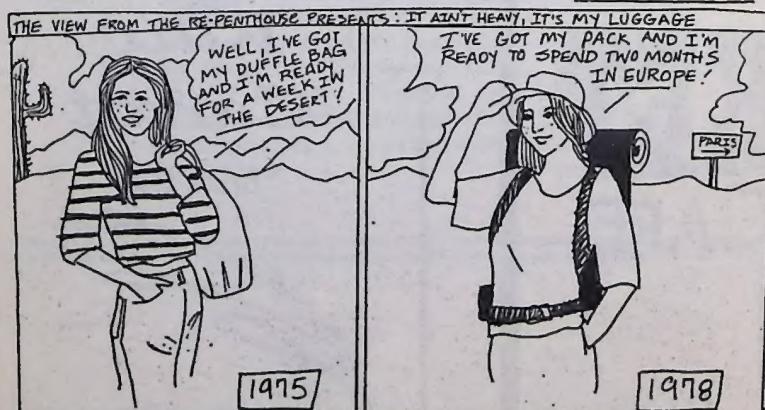
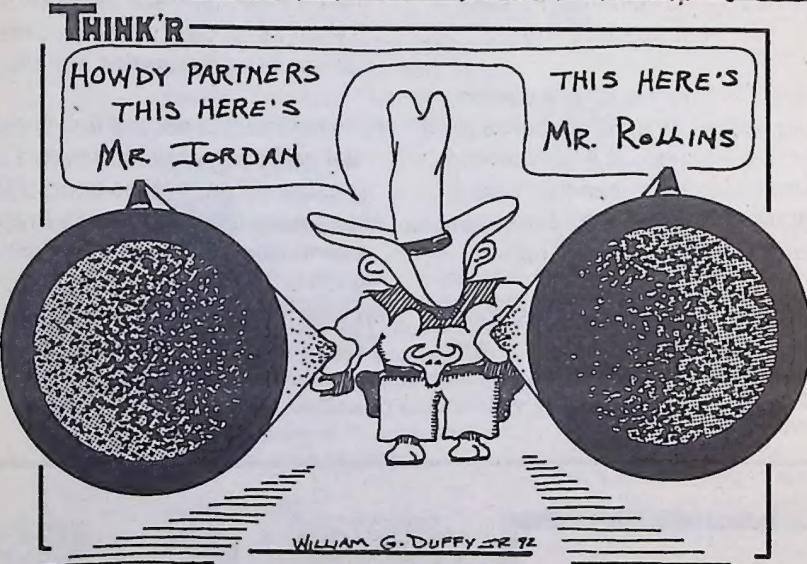
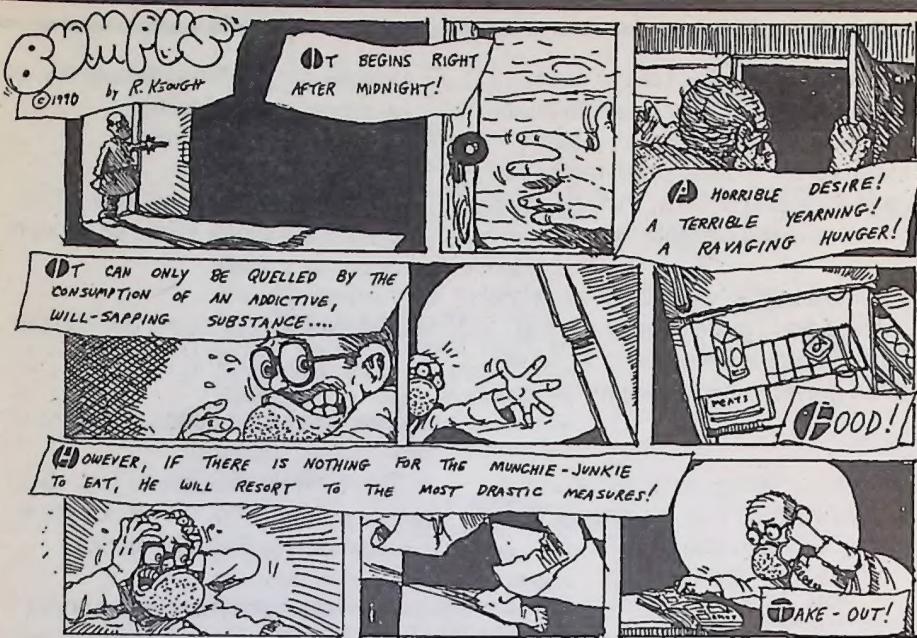
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LOCAL HEROES

FOOLING WITH MOTHER NATURE



TAKE IT OR LEAVE IT

by L.M. Boyd

Q. Why is the card game "poker" called that?

A. A gambler named Lewis something-or-other who worked along the Mexican border coined the name from the German "pochen" meaning "to bluff." So says a word tracer, who adds that Lewis was killed in a brothel gunfight.

The English poet Dame Edith Sitwell decreed: "The public will believe anything so long as it is not founded on truth."

Blond beards grow faster than beards of any other color.

A real estate salesperson keeps a small box of crayons and crayon drawings in the trunk of her car, and puts them in a smaller bedroom whenever she shows an open house. The smell of crayons, she says, is one of the most recognized odors, a perfume of nostalgia that means home.

Seasoned seamen in the Atlantic recognize the Gulf Stream by its dark blue color.

Nerve fibers of the left ear to the right hemisphere of the brain tend to send a more powerful signal inward than do fibers of the right ear. So say the medical researchers. This phenomenon is common enough to merit a name—"the left-ear advantage."

Claim is an aircraft carrier gets six inches to the gallon of fuel.

Q. What started that old line: "Feed a cold and starve a fever"?

A. Goes way back. To when people thought the body had a sort of furnace inside. They figured a chill was a signal to stoke up the furnace with food and a fever was a signal to let the furnace fire die down with a fast.

At least half the court cases involve the automobile in some significant way.

To keep deer out of their apple orchards, some growers hang bars of deodorant soap in their trees.

Odds run eight to one that in a random group of 40 people, two will have the same birthday.

Consider cats that fall out of skyscraper windows. The seventh floor is the deadliest, evidently. Fatality statistics show cats' death rates rose up to the seventh floor, then declined from the seventh on up.

The making of pots was not exactly a prestigious profession in Biblical times. Potters were buried in segregated graves, now known as "potters' fields."

Q. Which demographic group in the United States has the longest life expectancy?

A. Nuns.

Takes about 720 peanuts to make a pound of peanut butter.

"Sequential scan" is what a computer does to search its memory banks for a bit of information. If a 50-year-old human's brain worked that way, it would take 400 years to answer the question: "What is your name?"

The Vatican's per capita consumption of Scotch whisky is 18 times greater than Great Britain's. So say the industry record-keepers.

Q. How far can a Monarch butterfly go without refueling?

A. About 620 miles.

Sharkologists claim that even the embryo of the Great White shark can bite.

Most American car horns honk in the key of F.

Q. How many time zones are there in China?

A. There's land enough for five. But only one time zone. All clocks there conform to Beijing's clocks.

Surely no time is more appropriate than an election year to quote Mark Twain as follows: "In all matters of opinion, our adversaries are insane."

H. Ross Perot is not the first presidential personage to characterize the presidency as "not too good a job." Those were the exact words President Calvin Coolidge used to describe it when in 1928 he also said, "I do not choose to run." A reporter asked him, "Why not?" He answered, "No room for advancement."

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Floods

 The onset of the southwest monsoon in Sri Lanka produced a dramatic shift from a parching drought to unprecedented downpours which brought the worst floods in living memory to the capital city of Colombo. The 20 inches of rainfall measured at the capital's official weather station was the heaviest on record. Civil defense officials estimated that as many as 250,000 people were forced from their homes by the flash floods. Ceylon Electricity Board, which recently drew up plans to ration hydroelectric power because of low water levels, considered shutting off power if flood waters reach its electrical power plant.

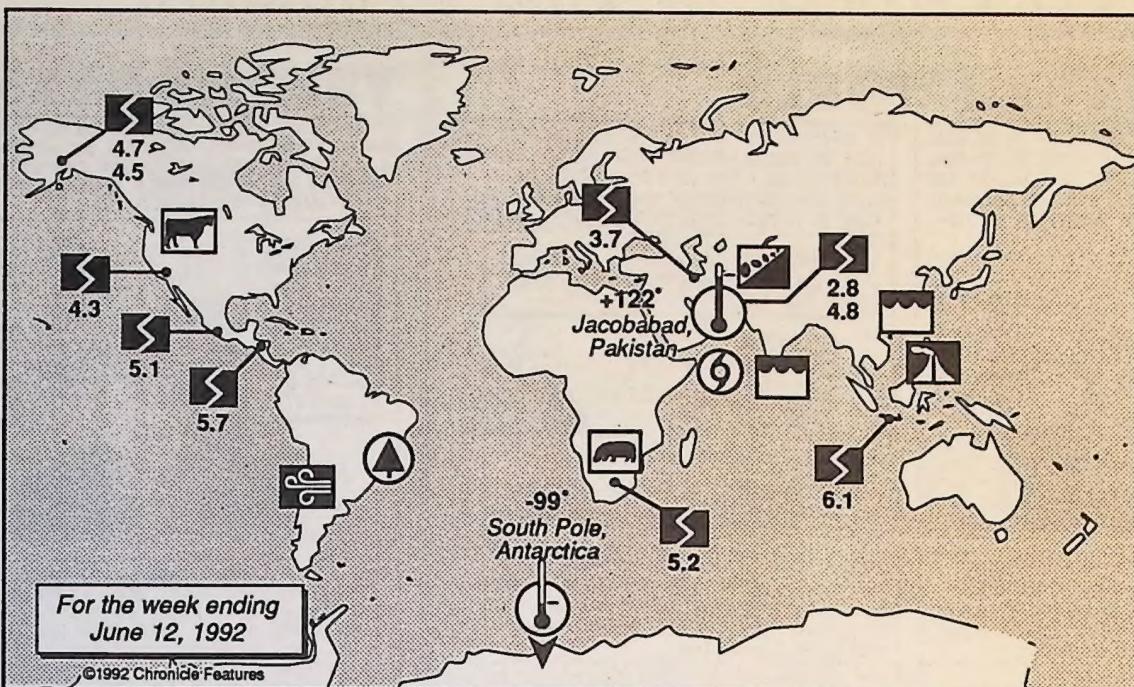
Residents of Hong Kong have endured more rain so far this year than at any other time this century, and the rainy season has only begun. "Besides putting a damper on outdoor recreation, the rains have also washed large amounts of nutrients into the sea, causing an increase in red tides, which are harmful to marine life," said Lam Chiu-ying of the Hong Kong Royal Observatory.

Wintry Storm

 Four days of relentless snow, rain, and windstorms that swept across much of Chile killed eight people and made 26,000 others homeless. The National Emergency Office reported that the storms left hundreds of villages cut off from the outside. Many rivers were overflowing their banks, and thousands of homes, bridges, and roads were destroyed.

Landslide

 A giant mudslide unleashed by torrential rains in the Tajikistan capital of Dushanbe crushed 100 homes, killing 15 people. The Interfax news agency said the landslide also damaged a factory and left whole neighborhoods covered beneath a layer of mud.

**Drought Victims**

 The severe drought in southern Africa is threatening the lives of hundreds of hippopotami. About 300 of the creatures live around the Limpopo, Letaba, and Olifants rivers in the northeastern Transvaal, but large sections of the waterways have dried up and grazing land is depleted. In addition to needing the water for drinking, the hippos must remain submerged for long periods to protect their sensitive skin from the sun. Transvaal wildlife officials say six hippos have died since June 1, and that they are trying to raise funds to move the animals temporarily to areas with sufficient water and grass.

Volcano

 The Philippines' Mount Canlaon Volcano erupted with a plume of ash and debris that fell over a wide swath of Negros Island. Canlaon had a mild eruption last year.

Earthquakes

 About 50 schoolchildren were injured in a stampede caused by a relatively weak, but strongly felt, tremor in Pakistan's Baluchistan province. A more powerful quake caused light damage in South Africa's Orange Free State. Earth movements were also felt from Mexico's Guerrero coast to Mexico City, in parts of Honduras and El Salvador, Java, northern Iran, northwestern Pakistan, the Southern California desert, and southern Alaska.

Deforestation

 A U.N. study released at the Earth Summit in Rio warned that the destruction of tropical forests increased by 50 percent during the past decade. The report by the Food and Agricultural Organization said that approximately 41 million acres of forest land currently are destroyed each year, compared with 27.9 million acres in 1980.

Tropical Storm

 A weak tropical storm formed over the Indian Ocean, then lost force as it moved into the Arabian Sea.

Natural Gas

 Canadian bovines are getting a bum rap in the media about what they do naturally, according to the Alberta Cattle Commission. *The Calgary Herald* reported that the commission has asked Alberta's 30,000 cattle ranchers to watch for inaccurate news reports blaming cattle for helping cause global warming. Commission spokeswoman Joanne Lemke is angered by the belief that methane produced by cattle is a major source of greenhouse effect gasses. She claimed that Canadian cattle produce less than 0.1 percent of the methane in the atmosphere.

Additional Sources: U.S. Climate Analysis Center, U.S. Earthquake Information Center, and the World Meteorological Organization.



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Nate Tynan of South Hadley stops to sober up by reading *The Valley Comic News* in front of "da Bearz", Soldier Field in Chicago, Illinois during the 1992 Annual Blues Fest. (photo: Brett Kime)

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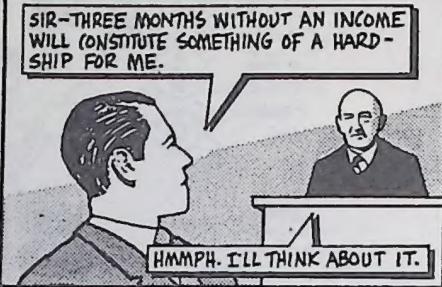
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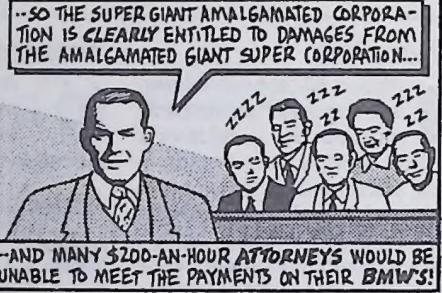
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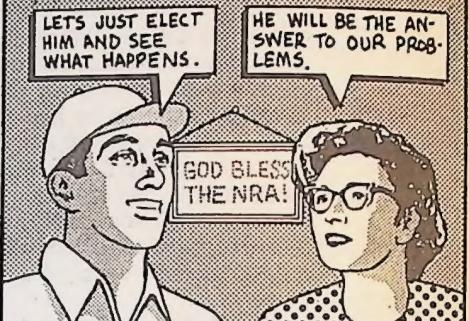
THIS MODERN WORLD

TOM TOMORROW

AFTER CAREFULLY CONSIDERING MANY ALTERNATIVES (INCLUDING THE WALL ST. JOURNAL), H. ROSS PEROT DECIDES TO USE LARRY KING'S SHOW AS THE VENUE FOR A CAREFULLY-PLANNED "SPONTANEOUS" REMARK...



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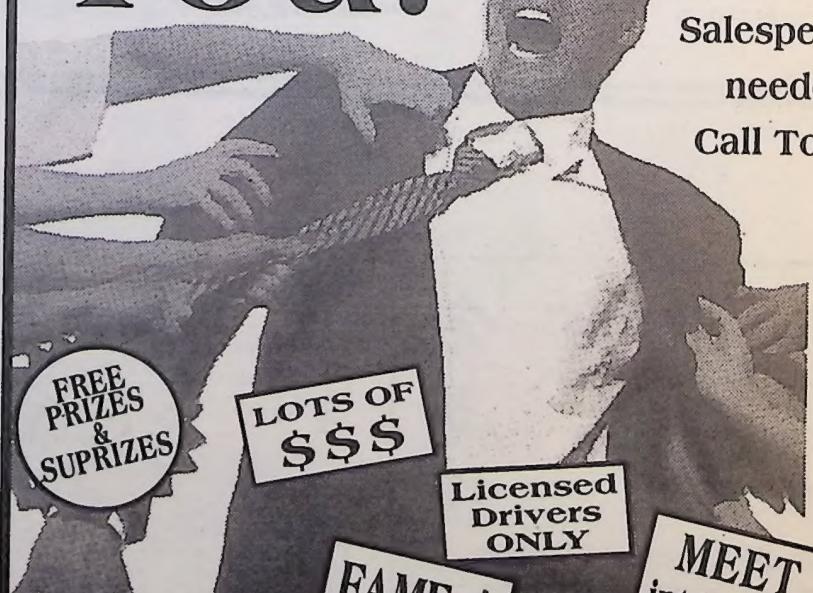
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JOE BOB BRIGGS

When El Lay was burning, George Bush's first thought was, "Who can I punish?" He had a meeting with the Attorney General. A press conference was held. The solution:

We can re-prosecute these cops in federal court for civil rights violations.

Maybe if we promise to put 'em in jail again, he was thinking, the fires and the killing will stop.

But the fires and the killing didn't stop. It took the National Guard and the Marines to stop the fires. It took Rodney King, who couldn't even express the pain he was feeling, to stop the fires. His statement was so confused we didn't even hear what he said. We just saw it on his face: This is not America.

And that's what stopped it — one guy calling for peace.

But George had already made this promise. He'd promised revenge on the cops that beat Rodney King. Now let's look at what might happen if he goes through with it.

Scenario No. 1: A federal jury finds the cops innocent again. Surely Bush knows he wouldn't be able to control it. It wouldn't just be El Lay, and it wouldn't just be fires. It would be running gun battles in the streets.

I know people who think this is impossible — that the Simi Valley verdict was a freak, and that nobody could look at that tape of King being brutalized and return a second innocent verdict. But look at what will be different this time.

First, everyone knows these cops are guilty, and everyone knows they should go to jail, and 99.9 percent of the population has already seen the tape. And so how do you ever find a jury that doesn't have opinions about the case? Where do you look? Mexico? And then, once you get the jury, what do you have? People whose brains have been so fried by drugs or something that they didn't bother to turn on the TV or pick up a newspaper when the country was going through the riots. A jury like that can do anything.

They're mental defectives to begin with.

Second, if I were an attorney for the cops, I would make a big deal about the *power* being exercised against these men. My summation would be something like this:

"Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, do you call it a fair trial when the President himself uses all the influence of the highest office in the land to put four police officers in jail for his own political motives? Do you see these hundreds of reporters coming and going from this courtroom and still believe that this is anything but a lynch mob? Haven't you felt pressure from the day you became a juror in this trial? Even if the pressure wasn't spoken or overt, haven't you felt that you're being *threatened*? Aren't you being told to bring in a verdict of guilty, 'for the good of the country,' even if it means treating four police officers like scapegoats? I ask you to do the courageous thing. I ask you to be braver than our leaders or our media or the mob that threatens to burn down this courthouse if you don't return the verdict that *they* want. I ask you to remind people that this is a nation of laws, not of mob rule."

In other words, with the odds stacked so high *against* these cops, there will naturally be sympathy for them as underdogs. I'm not saying it'll be enough to save them from jail — after all, they did beat the crap out of Rodney King — but juries can do any damn thing they want.

Scenario No. 2: Let's say they do convict the four cops. Is this a victory for Bush? Not really. What if they get convicted, but then get probation sentences, so they don't serve any jail time? Riots.

Scenario No. 3: Let's say they get jail terms, but it's one of those three-years-in-prison, eligible-for-parole-after-one-year kinds of sentences. There could still be major problems.

Scenario No. 4: They get jail terms, but they're eligible to be assigned to one of the "country club" federal prisons. Somebody takes pictures of them playing racquet ball. Still

bad news.

Scenario No. 5: They get stiff jail terms and go to Leavenworth. Now we have a different problem. Now they have become *martyrs* for police officers everywhere. (They already are, to some extent.) Even the cops who know, in their hearts, that these are bad apples, will have some sympathy for the guy who, at the end of a high-speed chase, loses control and uses excessive force. They won't excuse it necessarily. But they'll say, "Hey, at least give us the same breaks that we see judges and juries giving to the criminals we arrest every day." And there will be some cops who, when they enter minority neighborhoods, will start looking the other way rather than put themselves in a situation where *they* could be the next headline. Not many cops, but it would happen. They would deny it, but they would do it.

The federal government started this double prosecution of cops in the late 1970's. The first case was Frank Hayes, the police chief of Castroville, Texas, who took a Mexican-American prisoner out onto a lonely isolated highway in the dead of night and shot him dead, then hid the body. Hayes told a state jury that he took the prisoner out there just to scare him a little, and his shotgun went off accidentally — and got off with only an assault conviction. But the U.S. Attorney General re-prosecuted him under laws that say if someone gets killed by a man acting "under color of law" (wearing a cop's uniform), then you've committed a major civil rights violation and can be punished with anything up to a life term in prison.

That's exactly what Hayes got — a life term in prison, which he's now serving.

The courts ruled that this is *not* double jeopardy, to be tried first in state court, then in federal. It looks like double jeopardy to me. No matter what you think about the crimes, the fact is these cops are being tried twice for the same thing. (The ACLU, strangely enough, supports this type

of double jeopardy.) It may be what we need, but it makes cops think that they're the only citizens in America who can be tried and tried and tried, over and over again, until you get a guilty verdict on them. They don't like it. I think you can see why.

So there's one other thing that Bush could do. He could say, "let the bastards go."

Let the creeps on both sides go — the dirty cops, and the twisted pathetic goons who protest a murder verdict by clubbing innocent people on the street.

We all know they're guilty. It's important that we know they're guilty. It's important that this never happen again. It's important that cops know that, if they ever use a billy club like that, they're going down. It's important that street cowards know that, if they ever gang up on an innocent civilian again, Rambo is gonna show up in their living rooms.

But we could let these guys go as a symbol — that, even though they don't deserve it, we want to make one simple effort to end the cycle of revenge and choose leniency, peace, restraint. When hate-filled people are trying to get in the last blow, make the last speech, *win the argument*, it takes a brave person to say, "Okay, I'll take the last blow. You win. It stops here."

It would only work if Rodney King agreed that this is what he wanted, too.

But even if he did, it wouldn't happen, of course. Bush likes revenge too much. Black leaders want revenge. Liberals, conservatives, the media, everyone wants revenge. We have too many people in this country who still believe that, if you put enough people in jail, send enough "loud messages," get enough court decisions and convictions, that we can force people not to be racists, not to break the law, not to hate so much. And what happens instead? The constant fights in the courts are precisely what makes the hate bigger. The biggest hatemongers are the people who hate the haters:

We don't need more trials and court decisions. We don't need more justice. We need more mercy. This would be a way to begin.

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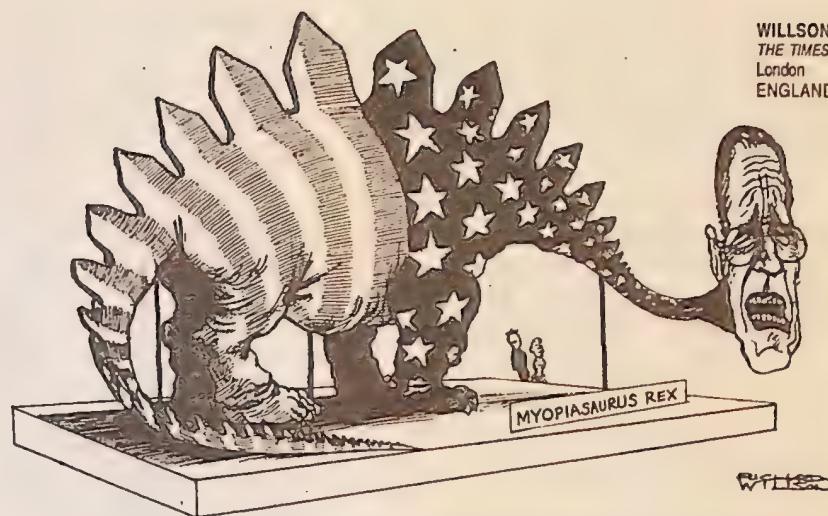
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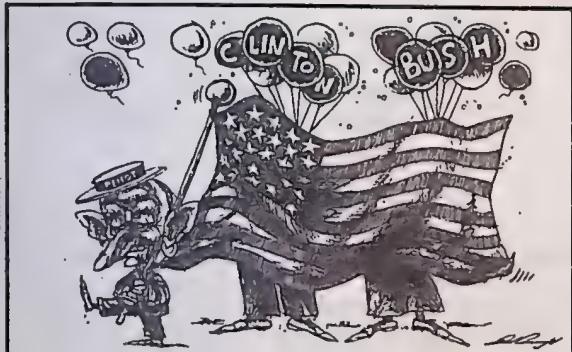
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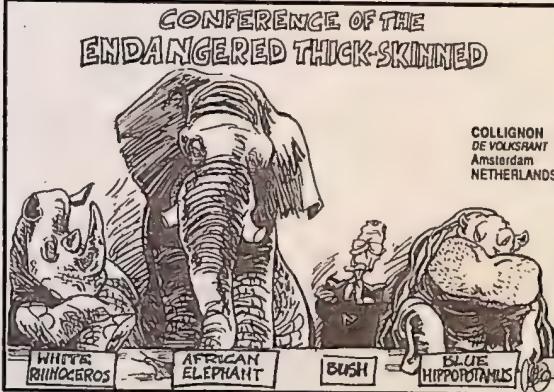


"The trouble was, son, it could never see beyond the next election."

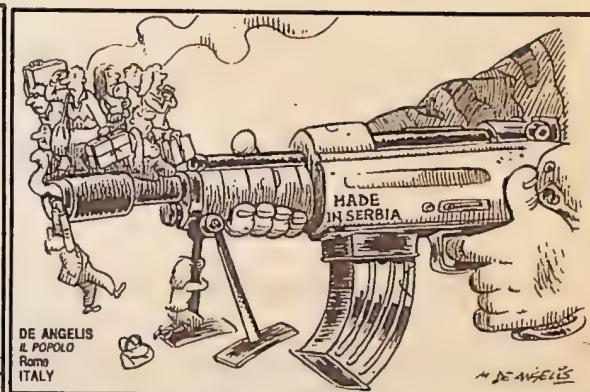
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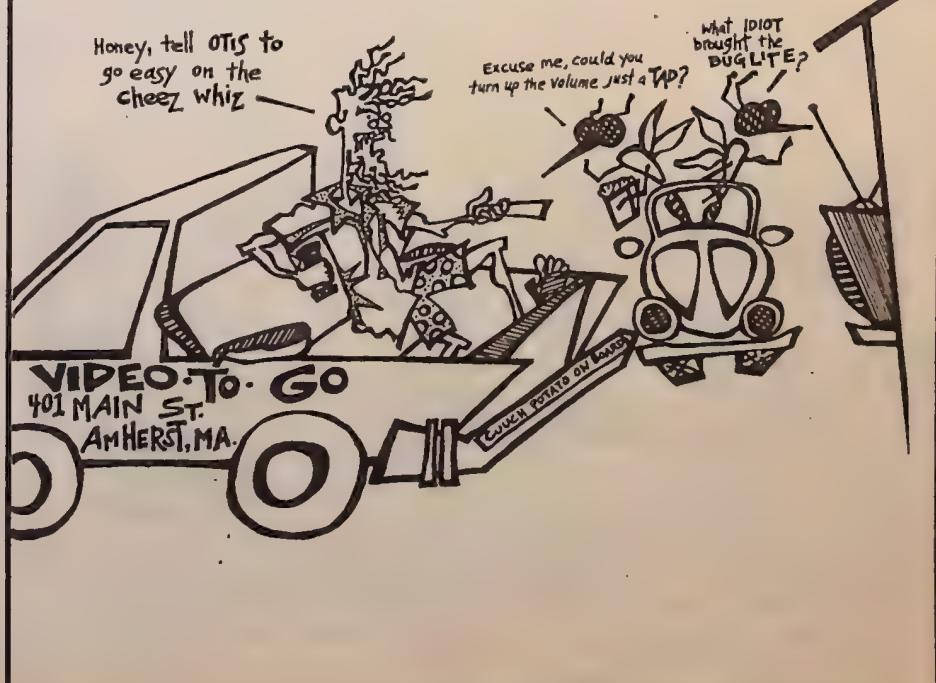
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MORE SOCIAL SUGGESTIONS FROM VIDEO-TO-GO: PERSONAL DRIVE-IN

On a balmy eve; stick TV + VCR out a window, serve popcorn w/cheez whiz, and observe from open vehicles w/assorted drive-in nuts.....



THE FAR SIDE

By GARY LARSON



"Carl, maybe you should just leave your flashlight off. We're trying to scare these kids, not crack 'em up."



As suddenly as it started, Joe's gagging is alleviated when a small ninja sword is dislodged from his throat.

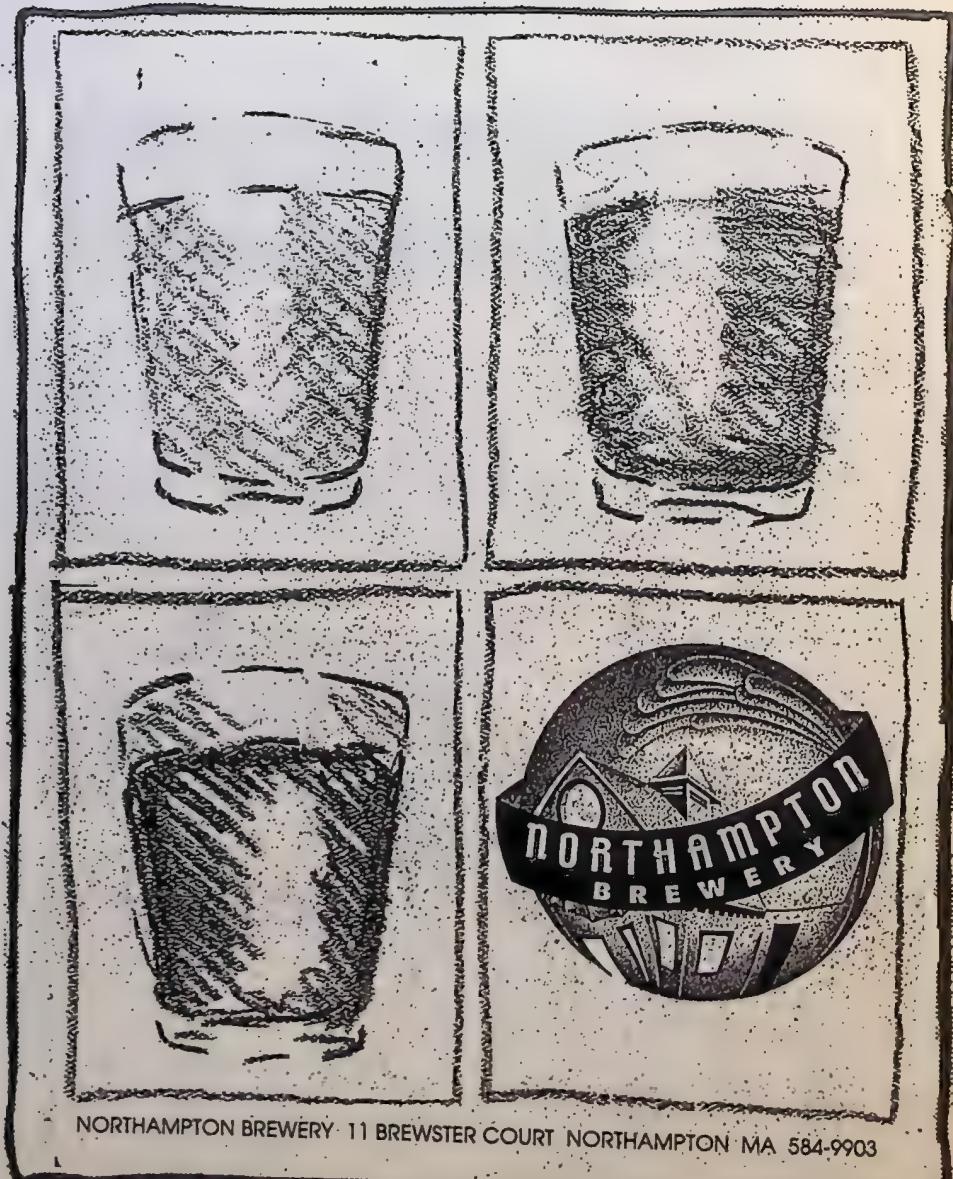


"Man, the Kellermans are bold! . . . If it wasn't for our screens, they'd probably walk right in!"

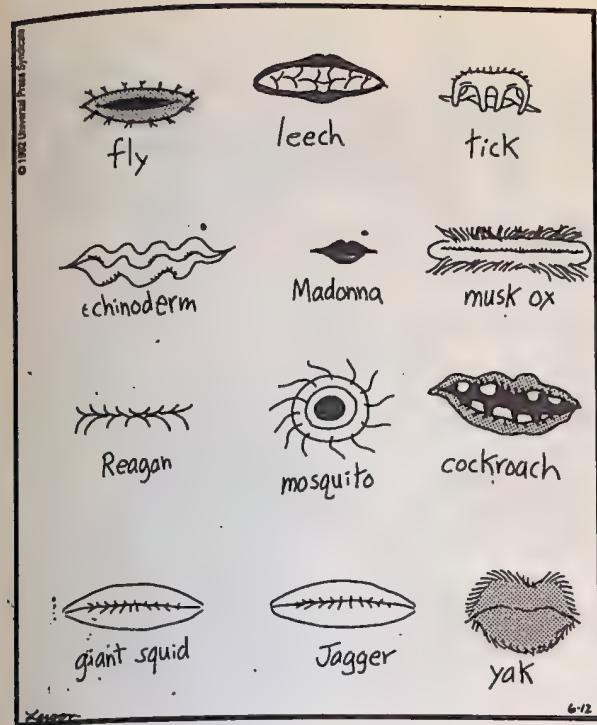
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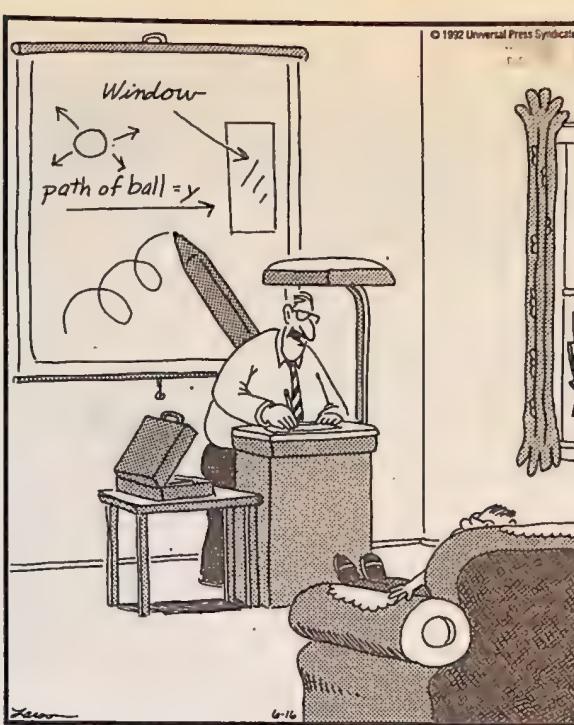
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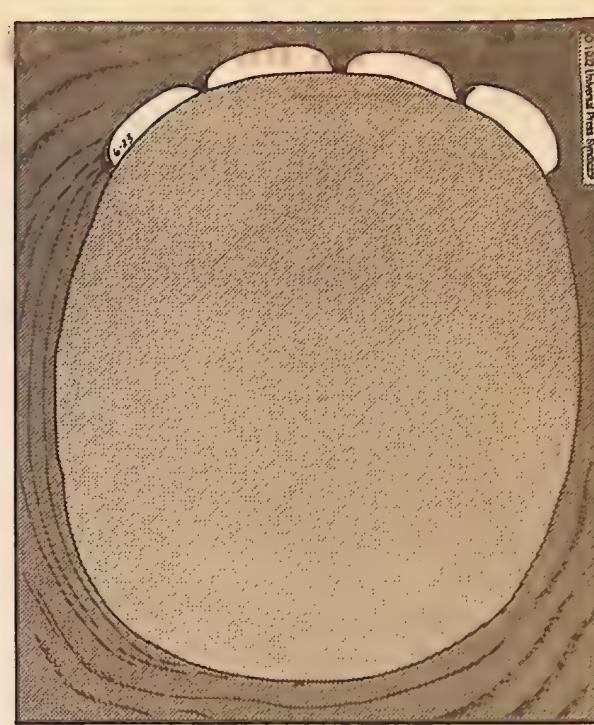
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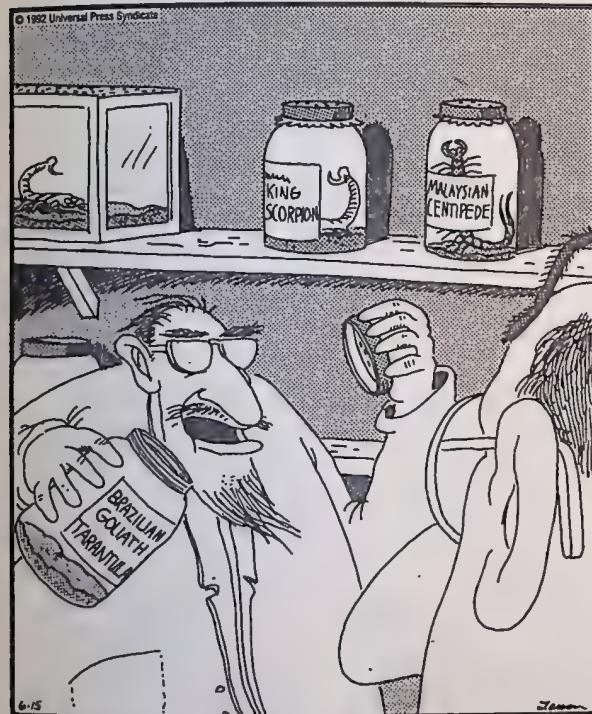
Lips of the animal kingdom



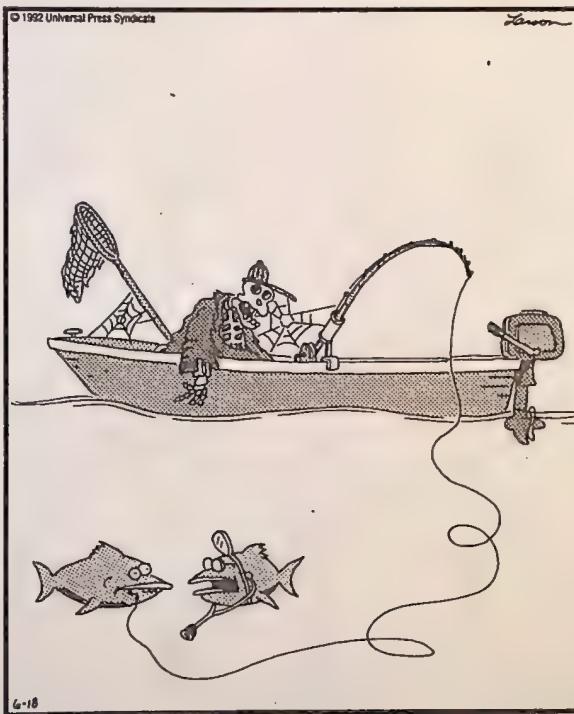
Eventually, Billy came to dread his father's lectures over all other forms of punishment.



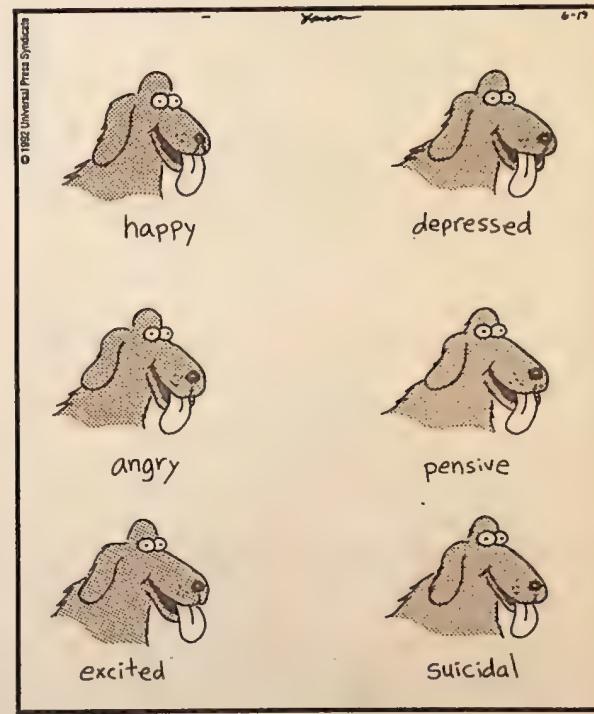
The last thing you see of an annoyed elephant.



"There you are, my darling . . . Rawlings! Don't move!"



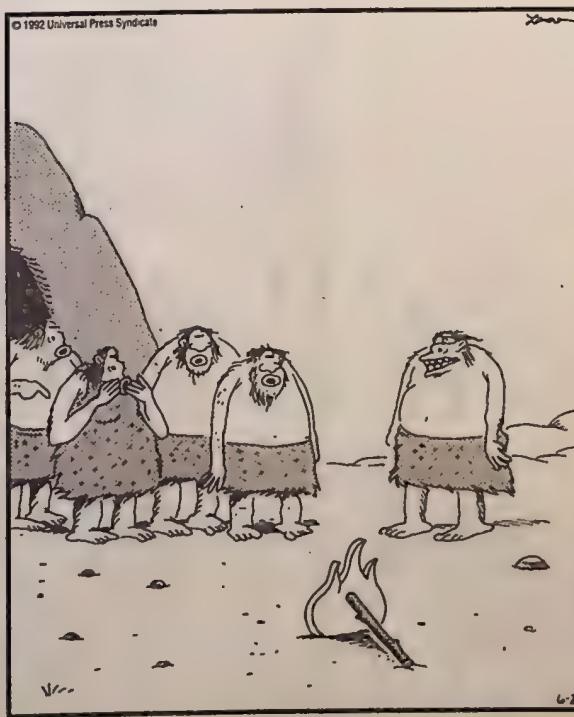
"Well, first the bad news — you're definitely hooked."



How to recognize the moods of an Irish setter



Before their admission to any canine university, dogs must first do well on the CATs.



Zorg dupes the entire tribe in an incident later known in prehistory books as "firegate."



Every afternoon a sugar cube dealer would slowly cruise the corral looking for "customers."

Yeah, there you are standing on the rocks by the seashore. You've got life figured out and you're cool. In fact, Life is cool.

All of a sudden a rogue wave comes out of nowhere and slaps you in the water. You hurt your back. The doctor says you'll be in pain and walk a little funny for the rest of your life.

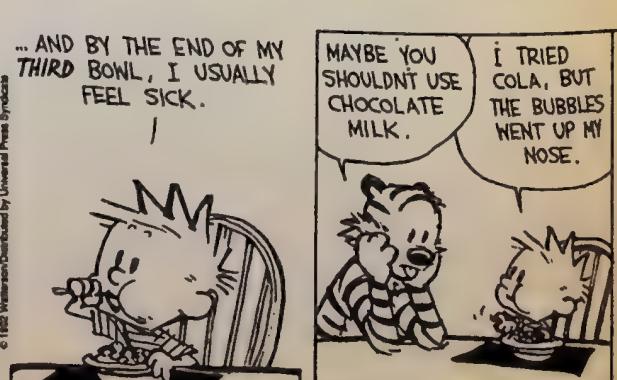
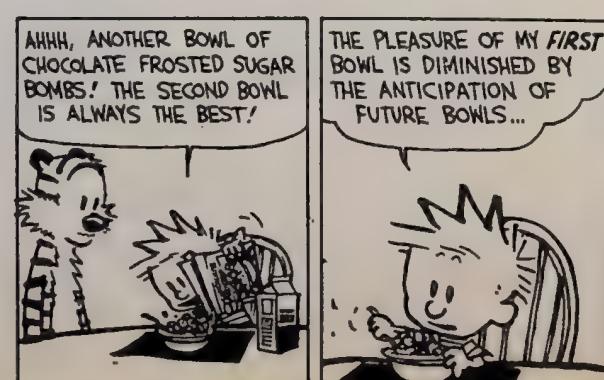
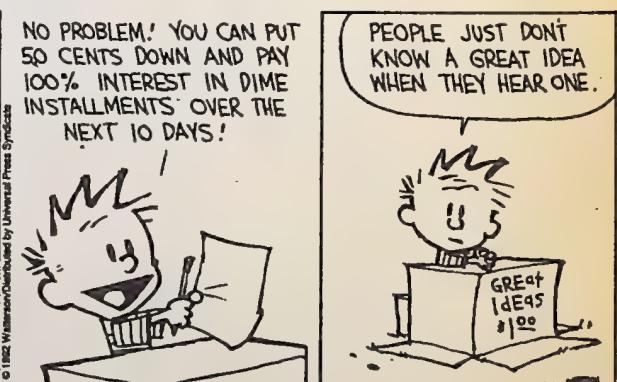
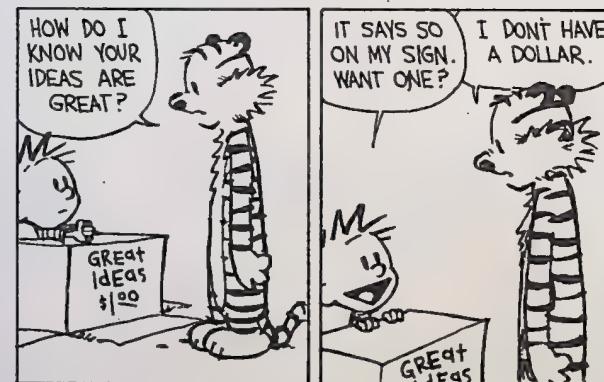
You're angry, then you're bitter, then you party for a long long time. You start to feel better, even a little confident. Maybe, you're even happy.

Before you know it, you've limped out to those same rocks by the seashoreready for more waves.



calvin and Hobbes

by BILL WATTERSON





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THIS IS A SOUND BITE!
THIS IS ENTERTAINMENT!
THIS IS SENSATIONALISM!



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TODAY SAYS, "DO NOTHING." SO DOES TOMORROW, AND EVERY DAY AFTER...ALL THE WAY THROUGH THE END OF AUGUST.



6-19 WATT



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DO WE GET SMOCKS? I WANT A SMOCK!

THIS KIND OF CLAY ISN'T THAT MESSY. YOU DON'T NEED A SMOCK.



LET'S GET A MARKER AND WRITE. DON'T KNOCK MY SMOCK, OR I'LL CLEAN YOUR CLOCK.

I GUESS IT WOULDN'T SHOW IF DAD WORE HIS SUIT COAT.

6-22 WATT



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YOU CAN TELL THE QUALITY OF THE ARTIST BY THE QUALITY OF HIS SMOCK.

UH HUH... YOU HAVE TO WORK THIS STUFF A BIT TO GET IT SOFT.



SEE, JUST KNEAD IT LIKE SO, AND THEN IT CAN BE MODELED.

SMOCK SMOCK SMOCK SMOCK SMOCK!

WHAT ON EARTH IS WRONG WITH YOU?

6-23 WATT



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IF YOU WANT TO INFLUENCE PEOPLE, POPULAR ART IS THE WAY TO GO. MASS MARKET COMMERCIAL ART IS THE FUTURE.



SO WHAT KIND OF SCULPTURE ARE YOU MAKING?

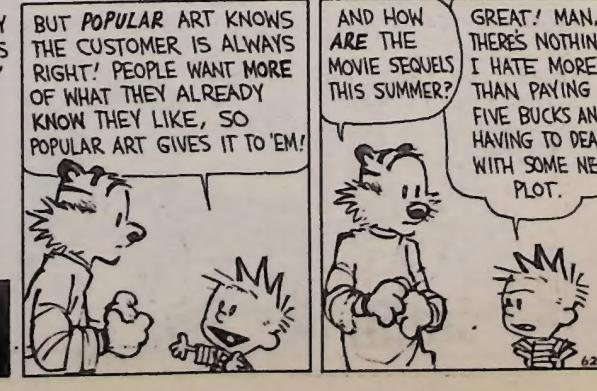
PLEASE! IT'S NOT "SCULPTURE"; IT'S "COLLECTIBLE FIGURINES."

6-24 WATT



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BUT WHO LIKES ORIGINALITY AND TRUTH? NOBODY! LIFE'S HARD ENOUGH WITHOUT IT! ONLY AN IDIOT WOULD PAY FOR IT!



AND HOW ARE THE MOVIE SEQUELS THIS SUMMER?

GREAT! MAN, THERE'S NOTHING I HATE MORE THAN PAYING FIVE BUCKS AND HAVING TO DEAL WITH SOME NEW PLOT.

6-25 WATT



Photo: Jennifer Burdick

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humor me

by Izzy Gesell

Here is the synopsis of the forthcoming *Thelma and Louise 2: the Aftermath*. Saved by a sudden updraft of wind as they soar over the Grand Canyon, the women glide to safety on the Far Side of the gorge. Tired of the chase the two turn themselves in and, much to their surprise and delight, find themselves national heroines.

Bringing them to trial on charges of murder, armed robbery, property destruction and embarrassing a police officer, the prosecution soon realizes that because of the publicity it is impossible to find a jury that has not heard of the case. The only people in America who have never read a paper or watched the news on TV have already served on the Oliver North or William Kennedy Smith juries. Allowed to plead guilty to littering, drinking while driving and leaving the scene of a crime, T&L are each sentenced to one year in prison.

On their release they are arrested in Florida under an archaic law that makes it illegal for women to be poor role models. It seems that all the hype in the papers about them and the resultant adulation they received from men, women and children following their first escapade frightened the folks in power into thinking that T&L were a menace (Womennance?) to the status quo. Again they are forced to stand trial. As evidence, the prosecution drags up the columns, articles and editorials that had appeared when the movie was first released. All had ranted and raved about how horrible it was that women, given the same lousy plot lines and stock situations as men, would actually resort to VIOLENCE. Seems the writers would have preferred these ladies to do something more genteel. Perhaps become coy, flirtatious or co-dependent and accept the verbal and physical brutality while "understanding" that the poor abusive guy was really just a product of a childhood where boys do not get good role models so he really couldn't know any better.

T&L defend themselves by using the "hypocrisy defense." Each commentator is called to the stand and asked the same questions: "Would this brouhaha have occurred if, instead of shooting the guy themselves, they had called in either the Equalizer, the Terminator or that creepy kid from Home Alone to shoot the rat?" and "Would any notice at all have been taken if they had dressed as Ninja Turtles or Freddy Kreuger before they offed the guy?" The barely audible "No" to each question ensures that T & L are freed.

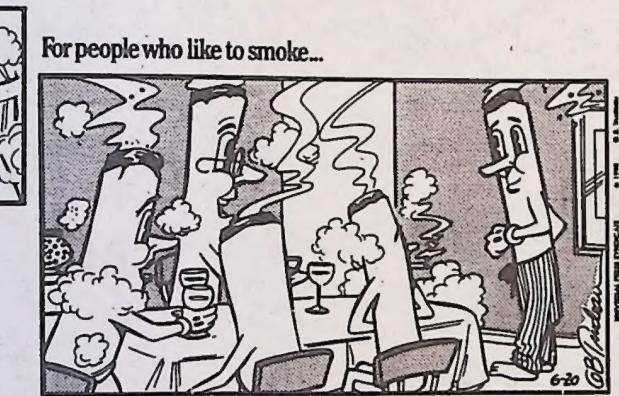
They return home to Arkansas to begin a syndicated TV reality show called *America's Most Insensitive*. Within a year they are elected to Congress, a position they decide to job-share so they can keep the TV show going. Their influence in Washington grows and grows as their innate common sense and overt desire to have fun captures the mood of the people. The movie ends as T&L celebrate the passage of the ERA, thus setting the stage for *Thelma & Louise 3: The Presidential Years*.

(Izzy is on vacation this issue.)

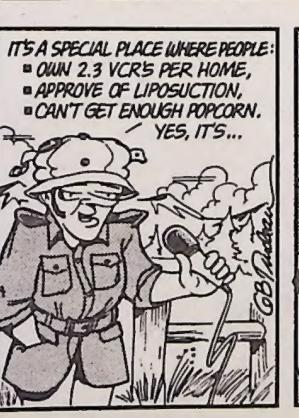
Doonesbury

BY G.B. TRUDEAU



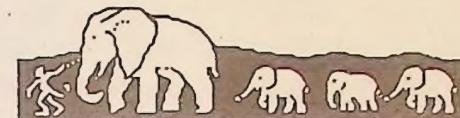


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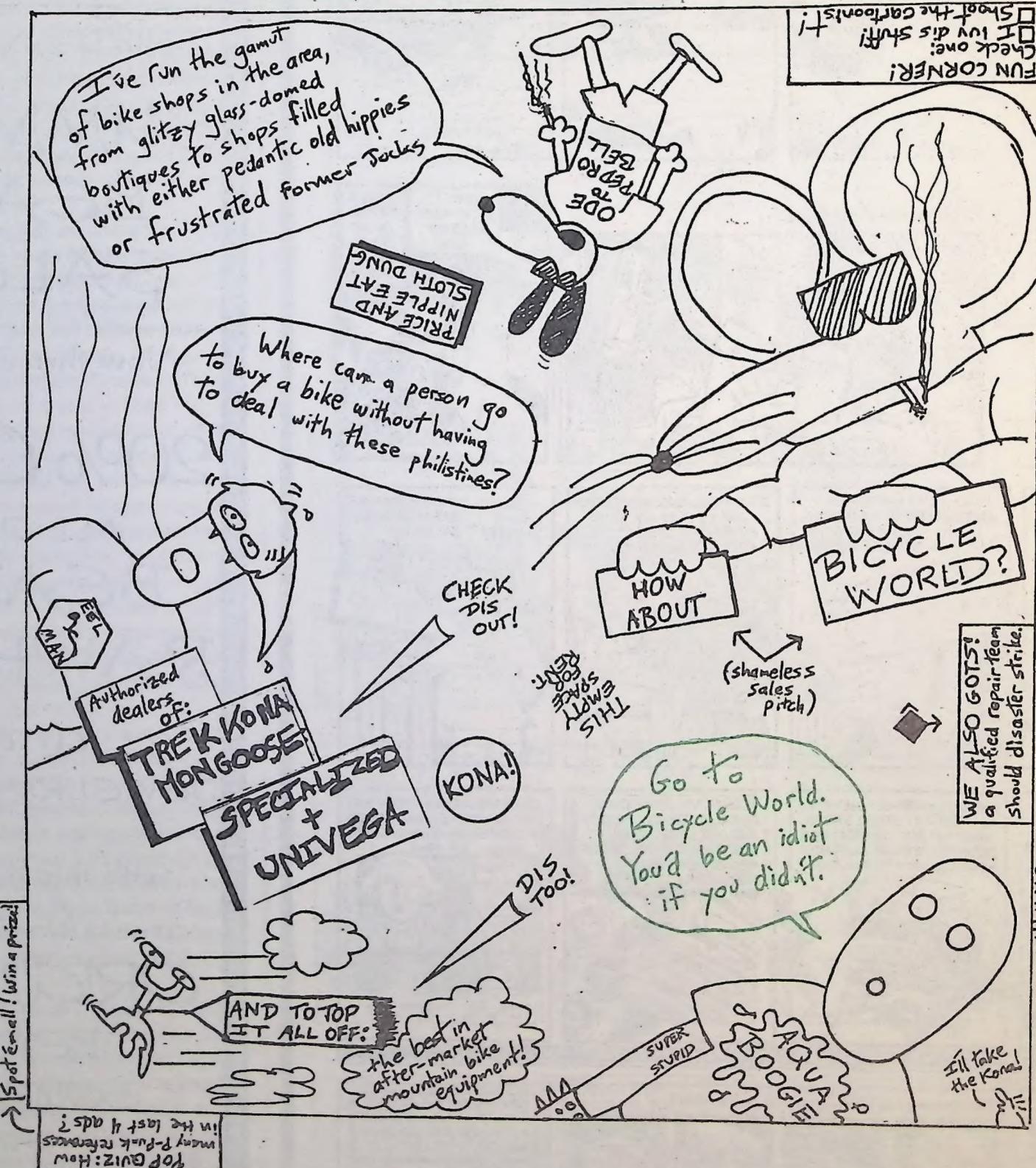
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